

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously amended) A method of loading content to a server in anticipation of a need for the content by network clients, the method comprising:
 - (a) determining the location of a client or group of clients that are likely to access the content;
 - (b) determining a first proximity between the client or group of clients and a first server capable of storing and serving the content;
 - (c) determining a second proximity between the client or group of clients and a second server capable of storing and serving the content; and
 - (d) determining a first loading proximity between a source of the content and the first server;
 - (e) determining a second loading proximity between a source of the content and the second server; and
 - (f) based upon the relative values of the first and second proximities and the values of the first and second loading proximities, loading the content into one of the first and second servers.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein loading the content to the second server is performed automatically by a content control system on the network.
3. (previously amended) The method of claim 2, wherein performing (b), (c), (d) and (e) is accomplished by the content control system.
4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first and second proximities are determined dynamically by a content control system.
5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the content is loaded to the server that is most proximate the client or group of clients.
6. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the content is multimedia content.
7. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the multimedia content is transmitted over the network in a compressed format.

8. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the content is video content.

9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by a combination of the following factors: bandwidth, number of hops, congestion, noise and loss on a network segment, and charges incurred to send.

10. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by considering whether the server and the client or group of clients are on the same sub-network.

11. (original) The method of claim 10, wherein content is loaded to the second server when the second server and the client or clients are on the same sub-network and the first server and the client or clients are not on the same sub-network.

12. (previously amended) The method of claim 9, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by summing the contributions of the factors.

13-38. (canceled)

39. (new) An apparatus of loading content to a server in anticipation of a need for the content by network clients, the apparatus comprising:

one or more processors; and

memory in communication with at least one of the one or more processors;

wherein at least one of the one or more processors is configured to

(a) determine the location of a client or group of clients that are likely to access the content;

(b) determine a first proximity between the client or group of clients and a first server capable of storing and serving the content;

(c) determine a second proximity between the client or group of clients and a second server capable of storing and serving the content; and

(d) determine a first loading proximity between a source of the content and the first server;

(e) determine a second loading proximity between a source of the content and the second server; and

(f) based upon the relative values of the first and second proximities and the values of the first and second loading proximities, load the content into one of the first and second servers.

40. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein loading the content to the second server is performed automatically by a content control system on the network.

41. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the content is multimedia content.

42. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by a combination of the following factors: bandwidth, number of hops, congestion, noise and loss on a network segment, and charges incurred to send.

43. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by a considering whether the server and the client or group of clients are on the same sub-network.

44. (new) An apparatus of loading content to a server in anticipation of a need for the content by network clients, the apparatus comprising:

(a) means for determining the location of a client or group of clients that are likely to access the content;

(b) means for determining a first proximity between the client or group of clients and a first server capable of storing and serving the content;

(c) means for determining a second proximity between the client or group of clients and a second server capable of storing and serving the content; and

(d) means for determining a first loading proximity between a source of the content and the first server;

(e) means for determining a second loading proximity between a source of the content and the second server; and

(f) means for, based upon the relative values of the first and second proximities and the values of the first and second loading proximities, loading the content into one of the first and second servers.

45. (new) The apparatus of claim 44, wherein loading the content to the second server is performed automatically by a content control system on the network.

46. (new) The apparatus of claim 44, wherein the content is multimedia content.

47. (new) The apparatus of claim 44, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by a combination of the following factors: bandwidth, number of hops, congestion, noise and loss on a network segment, and charges incurred to send.

48. (new) The apparatus of claim 44, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by a considering whether the server and the client or group of clients are on the same sub-network.

49. (new) A computer program product comprising a machine readable medium on which is provided program instructions for loading content to a server in anticipation of a need for the content by network clients, the program instructions comprising instructions for:

(a) determining the location of a client or group of clients that are likely to access the content;

(b) determining a first proximity between the client or group of clients and a first server capable of storing and serving the content;

(c) determining a second proximity between the client or group of clients and a second server capable of storing and serving the content; and

(d) determining a first loading proximity between a source of the content and the first server;

(e) determining a second loading proximity between a source of the content and the second server; and

(f) based upon the relative values of the first and second proximities and the values of the first and second loading proximities, loading the content into one of the first and second servers.

50. (new) The computer program product of claim 49, wherein loading the content to the second server is performed automatically by a content control system on the network.

51. (new) The computer program product of claim 49, wherein the content is multimedia content.

52. (new) The computer program product of claim 49, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by a combination of the following factors: bandwidth, number of hops, congestion, noise and loss on a network segment, and charges incurred to send.

53. (new) The computer program product of claim 49, wherein at least one of the first and second proximities is determined by a considering whether the server and the client or group of clients are on the same sub-network.